

GEORGE MARTIN OTTINGER

Chief of the Salt Lake Fire Department from 1871 to 1890
If you visit the Ottinger Hall and spend a short time in looking over
their relics and records you will know why the Veteran Volunteer Fire
men so greatly appreciated the

services George Martin Ottlinger
rendered the Salt Lake Fire De-
partment from 1871 to 1890.

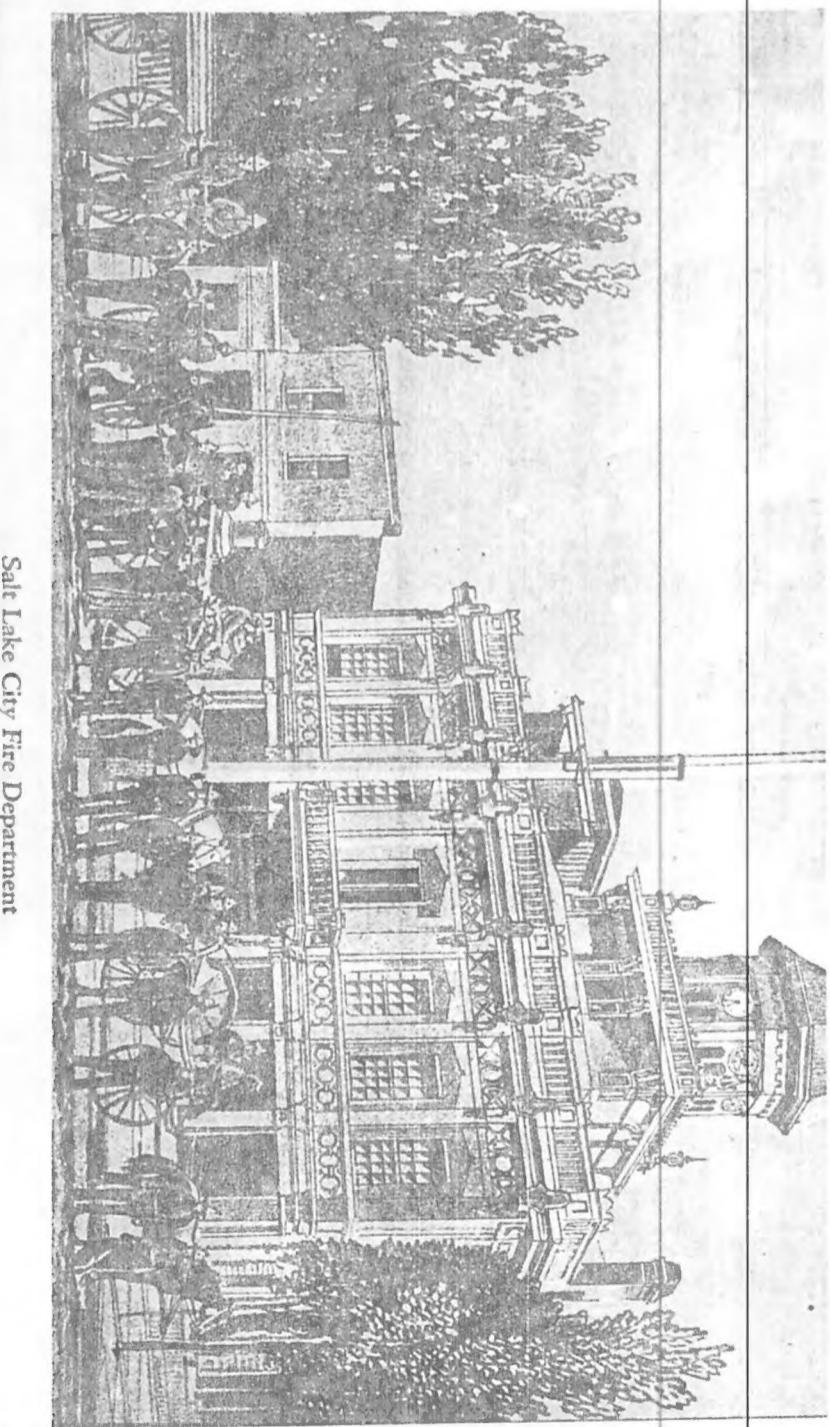
Their former-home was located
on Brigham Street, now South
Temple Street, east of Fourth
East Street. It faced the north
and was next to Guiver's Meat
Market, a little, low, one-story
building just large enough to
house their meager equipment,
and crowd in "the boys", as they
gathered to "spin yarns" and
talk it over after the excitement
of a fire.

The spirit of unity and help-
fulness was characteristic of their
organization. Their motto "We
Aim to Aid and Work to Save"
was ever in their minds and gov-
erned their actions. Throughout
the excitement, in the thick of
the smoke and the beat of the
flames, you could hear Chief Ott-
linger's encouraging voice as he
shouted through his silver horn
such requests as "Come on,
boys!" "Turn on more water!",
"A ladder here!" "A hatchet
there!" "Back up the interfering
crowd." Everyone went to the
fire, and oftentimes the interested,
anxious crowd was harder to
fight than the fire.

George Martin Ottlinger came
from Philadelphia to Utah in
1861. He had had previous ex-
perience in fire fighting while liv-
ing in New York and Baltimore.
Soon after arriving here he
joined a "Grab a bucket, hatchet
and torch (for night fire fighting)
and run" organization. He served
under the leadership of Chief
Jesse C. Little, as assistant engi-
neer to Chief Engineer John D.
T. McAllister, from 1871 to 1876.



George Martin Ottlinger



Salt Lake City Fire Department

1871-1890

Mayor George W. Luft, Councilman Joseph W. Lee, Richard Kemp, Lew Ward, and August Peterson, met together while the ruins were still smoking and decided to send to Salt Lake City and to the mine owners for aid. The people of Salt Lake City responded immediately, sending a train of food, bedding and furniture. Very little personal suffering was felt, as everyone living out of the business district, whose residence was not destroyed, provided meals and other relief.

An incident will show the intensity of the heat during the fire. One of the hose lines was connected with a hydrant in front of a brick store and bank. It was decided to remove the hose to use the water where it was needed more. As I was Chairman of the City Fire and Water Committee, I was chosen to attempt it. A blanket was thrown over me and a full stream of water was turned upon me. The heat was so intense that the blanket was burned off me, so it was impossible to turn off the water. After the sinking, February 1893, of the "Maine" (Spanish-American War), I was ordered to offer to Governor Heber M. Wells, the full membership of the department as volunteers. April 23, 1898, Captain Orin Grow, of the Utah National Guard, was sent to Mercur. Nearly every member of the Fire Department signed as volunteers. After May 1, 1898, when Admiral Dewey won a great victory at Manila, thousands of young men from all over the state offered their services.—William Waterfall.

When They Ran with the Old Machine

Brave relics of the past are we—

Old firemen staunch and true,
We are thinking now of the days gone by
And all that we have gone through.
Through fire and flame they made their way

And dangers we have seen,
We never can forget the time
When we ran with the old machine.

No rival could approach us then
In valor or in speed,
And often we have taken part
In many daring deed.
The fire bell was a bugle cry
That brought us to the scene
When lives were saved and dangers braved
When we ran with the old machine.

In numbers now we are but few,
A host have passed away,
But still we are happy, light and free—
Our spirits never decay.
We often sigh for those old days,
Whose memory we kept green,
Oh, there was joy for man and boy
When we ran with the old machine.

—Author Unknown.